

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: MACARIO IN PALERMO

REF: A.ROME 4270; B. PALERMO 0216

SUMMARY. IN MARCH 8 APPEARENCE IN PALERMO, CISL NATIONAL SECRETARY LUIGI MACARIO GAVE LOCAL VENT TO REDISCOVERED CONCERN THAT CGIL PREPARED SUBORDINATE TRADE UNION INTERESTS TO POLITICAL GOALS OF PCI. DURING HIS PALERMO STAY, MACARIO ALSO SHARED PLATFORM WITH CZECH DISSIDENT JIRI PELIKAN. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MARCH 8, REGIONAL CGIL-CISL-UIL STAGED A GENERAL STRIKE IN PALERMO TO PROTEST LOCAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND TO URGE EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC FUNDS ALREADY AVAILABLE FOR CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER PROJECTS BUT WHICH ARE HELD UP BY RED TAPE AND POLITICAL INDECISION. MACARIO (REPORTEDLY HERE TO STRENGTHEN HAND OF CISL'S YOUNG, NEW REGIONAL SECRETARY, SERGIO D'ANTONI) GAVE A KEYNOTE SPEECH STRESSING STANDARD THEMES AT A DOWNTOWN RALLY TROUBLED BY FEMINIST COMPLAINTS THAT THE UNIONS HAD PRE-EMPTED NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS.

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2. IN A POST-RALLY INTERVIEW WITH PALERMO'S DAILY GIORNALE DI SICILIA, MACARIO REITERATED CISL CONCERNS NOTED REFTEL THAT CGIL REMAINS AVAILABLE TO DO PCI'S POLITICAL BIDDING. MACARIO SAID CISL FIRST BECAME SENSITIVE TO THIS DEVELOPMENT WHWN ON DECEMBER 7 LAST YEAR PCI AND CGIL MET AND AGREED TO CALL NATIONAL GENERALSTRIKE AS FUNCTION

OF PCI'S DESIRE TO PRECIPITATE ANDREOTTI'S FALL IN ORDER TO MOVE INTO CLOSER POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT. MACARIO ACCUSED THE CGIL OF A "MESSIANIC FAITH" IN ACHIEVING LABOR GOALS THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION BY THE PCI AND OF A CONSEQUENT WILLINGNESS TO PLACE THE CGIL AT THE PCI'S POLITICAL DISPOSAL. AS EXAMPLES, MACARIO CITED PREVIOUS CCU AGREEMENT ON THE NEED FOR CONCRETE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND CHANGES IN ECONOMIC POLICY, ON TRADE UNION SACRIFICES ONLY IN EXCHANGE FOR REALISTIC MEASURES ATTACKING THE PROBLEMS OF THE MEZZOGIORNO AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT. NOW THAT THE "QUADRO POLITICO" HAD CHANGED, HOWEVER, SAID MACARIO, THE CGIL SEEMED SATISFIED AND LESS INTERESTED IN MORE CONCRETE POLICY OBJECTIVES. FOR ITS PART, MACARIO SAID THE CISL DOES NOT INTEND TO DELEGATE ITS ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO ANY POLITICAL PARTY AND REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AS THE ONLY MEANS FOR ACHIEVING WORKERS' GOALS. (COMMENT: INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT, WHATEVER DEFINITIONS THE DC USES, MACARIO CLEARLY BELIEVES THAT THE "QUADRO POLITICO" CHANGED WITH THE PROSPECT OF THE NEW ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT.)

3. IN PARALLEL ACTION, THE SICILIAN CISL HAS RECENTLY TAKEN A STRONG STAND AGAINST THE CGIL WHICH HAS ARGUED STRONGLY FOR A WATCHDOG COMMITTEE (REF B) WITH REAL POWERS (AND SUBSTANTIAL PCI PARTICIPATION) TO CONTROL AND CONDITION THE NASCENT CENTER-LEFT REGIONAL GIUNTA OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT-DESIGNATE MATTARELLA WHICH WILL BE BASED ON AN ASSEMBLY MAJORITY INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS. THE CISL HAS ARGUED THAT SUCH A COMMITTEE SHOULD HAVE AN ADVISORY ROLE ONLY AND THAT THE MANDATE SOUGHT FOR IT BY THE PCI WOULD VIOLATE THE EXECUTIVE POWER PROVISIONS OF THE SICILIAN REGIONAL STATUTE. THOUGH A JOINT REGIONAL CCU STATEMENT ISSUED ON MARCH 8 INDICATED THE CGIL HAD BACKED DOWN AT CISL INSISTENCE, D'ANTONI TOLD US MARCH 9 THAT REGIONAL CISL ORGANIZATION IS DETERMINED TO DEFEND UNION AND INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AGAINST FARTHER EFFORTS TO THE CONTRARY BY THE PCI AND CGIL. IN SAYING WHAT LOCAL CISL WAS PREPARED TO DO IN THESE AREAS, D'ANTONI MENTIONED THAT DC SEEMS RATHER LESS ENERGETIC IN THIS REGARD AND APPEARS PREPARED TO ACCEPT LAMA'S RECENT REASONABLENESS AT FACE VALUE.

4. IN RELATED EVENT DURING HIS PALERMO STAY, MACARIO ATTENDED A MEETING STAGED BY CISL'S COMMERCIAL-WORKERS UNION ON THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT. WHILE PRESS DEVOTED LITTLE COVERAGE TO TREATMENT OF MEETING'S THEME, IT GAVE SUBSTANTIAL PLAY TO ATTENDANCE BY CZECH DISSIDENT JIRI PELIKAN WHO TALKED ABOUT DUBCEK'S "BITTER EXPERIENCE" AS WELL AS LOW LIVING STANDARDS AND

THE LOSS OF LIBERTY CURRENTLY PREVAILING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
COLLINS

NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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